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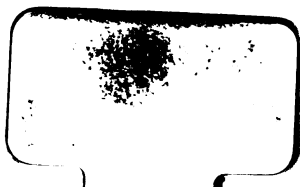
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LOVE FOR CHINA:
EXEMPLIFIED
IN
MEMORIALS OF MARY GUNSON,
THE
First Female Teacher
IN CONNECTION WITH THE
WESLEYAN METHODIST MISSION AT CANTON.
By GEORGE PIERCY.

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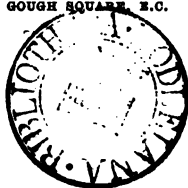
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TO
"THE LADIES' COMMITTEE
FOR
AMELIORATING THE CONDITION OF WOMEN
IN HEATHEN COUNTRIES,
FEMALE EDUCATION," &c.
THESE PAGES
ARE
RESPECTFULLY DEDICATED.



PREFACE.

DEATH strikes down many too soon, apparently, for the best interests of the cause in which they laboured. To our view it seems so ; but to the mind of God it is otherwise. He alone takes full cognizance of the work pertaining to His kingdom ; He only can see the way in which each agent will be most truly useful ; and He has the right to determine *how* they shall aid in advancing that kingdom, "whether it be by life, or by death."

On my homeward voyage from China, when the vessel touched at Aden, I had the opportunity of visiting the grave of a recently-deceased missionary brother. After many years labour in the south of China, Rudolph Kroné returned to Germany to recruit his wife's health. Two years were spent by them in their native land, then (their children left at home) husband and wife were on their way back to China. In Egypt disease attacked him ; and when they

reached the mouth of the Red Sea, he was landed at Aden—to die. There his body rests “in hope” of a joyful resurrection. Of a fine, loving, brotherly spirit, and richly qualified to renew his already successful labours in a field where many ardently awaited his arrival,—in the very prime of life, he was cut down. Prematurely, says man; but doubtless not for his influence to be lost to the cause of Christ. He rests from toil and suffering; his work, personally, fully done; but his example will long stir many to emulate his labours.

Sad feelings, not unmingled with joy,—flowed through my heart as I stood over that lonely grave. No “storied urn” or “animated bust” adorned it, yet one touching mark of very tender affection was left there,—a wreath of faded leaves and flowers. A loving hand, tremulous with sorrow, had dropt that chaplet, soon to lose all bloom and fragrance. So fades and decays every sign of human love! Marble or brass cannot long keep the memory of the good fresh on earth! Nor is it necessary; their record is on high, and *The Day* will declare it.

My task is but to weave such a chaplet for

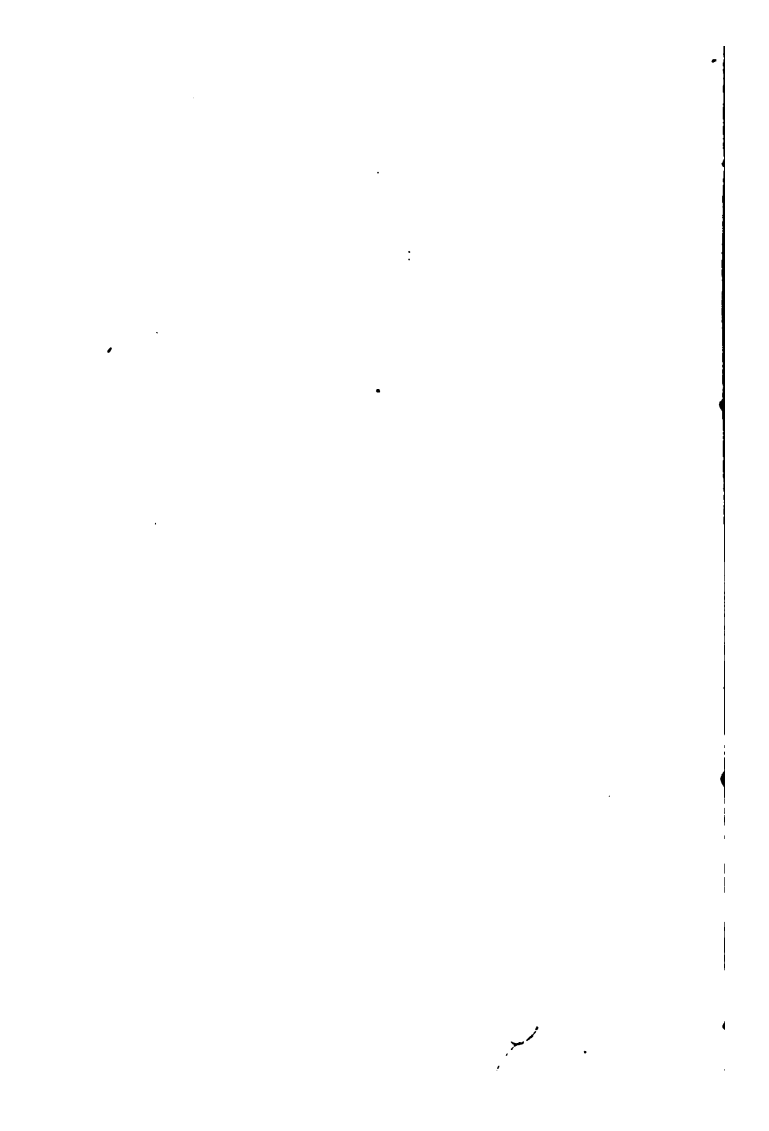
the tomb of the *first* lost by death to our mission. It were vain to wish this simple story might be, as the verdure, perennially green over her grave. No, it is but a wreath, soon to fade, yet is it the mark of high esteem and lasting affection.

PICKERING,

MARCH 15TH, 1865.

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Love for China.



I. INTRODUCTORY.

"EVERY good gift, and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning." JAMES. i. 17.

THE history of the Wesleyan-Methodist Mission in China extends over the last fourteen years, and has been marked by singularly uninterrupted labours. The God of Missions has given to His servants remarkably good health, and has graciously watched over and preserved valuable lives.

During these years, not one labourer has finally left the field from ill health; nor, with the exception of the decease of one dear infant, and the subject of this memorial, have the mission families suffered by the inroads of death. These two deaths are losses small indeed when compared with those of sister missions, some of which have been nearly broken up by removals home on account of ill health, or by translations to the better land above.

Our mercies appear the greater when taking into account the number of lives preserved ;— sixteen adults and seventeen children have been exposed to the trying influences of a tropical climate, counting the accessions the mission had received up to the time of Miss Gunson's death.

This gracious boon, the "good gift" of prolonged life and vigorous health accorded to the mission, has doubtless been in answer to prayer offered by the "thousands of our Israel," who have borne this mission on their hearts before God. In this respect they have had power with God and have prevailed. Surely none will cease intercession on this behalf, but will feel encouraged by knowing how graciously their prayers have been answered. The work thus auspiciously begun, needs to be carried on. A lighthouse has been erected on the shore of that great ocean of heathenism, but the light must be kept burning ; relays of labourers are needed for that first station at Canton,* to say nothing of extending the saving light farther into the deadly gloom.

This little book pleads for female labourers, who shall in the spirit of our lamented sister devote themselves to the work of instructing

* This is the more urgent now, as, since these lines were written, three of my colleagues have been obliged to return to England.

the women and girls of China in the only way to Heaven. It is the custom in China, as in many other Eastern lands, for the females of the higher and middle classes to be kept strictly secluded from all but their own sex ; so that any attempt to reach them for purposes of religious instruction must be made by female missionaries. In China, as elsewhere, female influence, especially in the maternal relation, is very powerful ; and complete success to the labours of Christian Missionaries can never be realized, unless such special efforts are made as shall effectually reach this part of the population. They are not difficult of access ; on the contrary, from motives of curiosity, the Chinese women are eager to visit and be visited by the foreign lady, especially if she can speak their language. In visiting respectable families, the female missionary will frequently find herself surrounded by from ten to thirty women and girls, to whom she may, as opportunity serves, make known the saving truths of the Gospel. The very poor, also, are gratified by a call, and an invitation to the chapel, though their miserable dwellings almost preclude the possibility of instruction being given them at home. Women of all classes are found willing to attend a Christian service, when it is known such is for females only.

Nor is the education of the female sex unfavourably regarded in China, though, compared with boys, few of the girls are taught even to read and write. On the mission stations there are no great difficulties in the way of establishing Girls' schools; and viewing the importance of female education, a much larger proportion of girls ought to be gathered into mission schools than are at present found in them. Schools for girls ought to be greatly multiplied, and they would be most valuable auxiliaries to our general mission work. "Woman's influence is according to her moral character," says a Chinese writer, a thought to be more fully acted on by us, in our efforts to press all agency into operation to further the salvation of China. "*No one teaches like a mother,*" is a sentiment of the same writer; and in educating the girls of the present generation we are securing the best teachers for the next.



II. HOME AND EARLY LIFE.

"What makes our country great among the lands,—
Beyond her works of art, her princely domes,
Her world-wide commerce, and her world-known fame?
Her holy Bibles, and her happy Homes!" I. F.

FROM the foot of Windermere the picturesque valley of Cartmel stretches southward towards Morecambe Bay. The road from Ambleside skirts the lake on the east, and after leaving its foot, winds down the valley through fruitful fields, passing here and there a beautiful mansion, nestling in the midst of noble trees, and by two or three villages, ere the traveller reaches the town of Cartmel, which gives its name to the valley.

At one of these villages, about two miles south of the lake, called Ayside, resides the family to which the subject of this memorial belonged. This family is a religious one; the father and mother having been from early life devoted to God.

James Gunson is a man of no ordinary energy of character. During a very active life, fond of books, he has spent much time in intellectual culture, whilst his religious duties have been most conscientiously discharged.

He has long been an acceptable local preacher in the Ulverstone Circuit, and an efficient superintendent of the Sunday School at Backbarrow, a village in that circuit.

Elizabeth Gunson is a woman in whom warm motherly love uniting with true Christian discretion, has "brought up" a large family; and the love felt towards her by her children (some touching expressions of which will appear in these pages) is the best index to her character.

Mary, their third daughter, was born December 20th, 1842, and entered life to enjoy the "nurture" of a lovely and loving Christian family. Though not remarkable in childhood for great quickness of mind, yet she had a lively disposition, and as she grew up, manifested such a degree of energy and perseverance as, in the estimation of her parents, amply compensated for the greater readiness seen in some children; and these qualities soon enabled her to overcome every difficulty in the pathway of knowledge. Her school hours were well filled up, and her progress such as to obtain the high encomiums of her teachers; especially in a school at Cartmel, conducted by three sisters, the Misses Harker. There she had a wider range of study than in the village school, and in addition to more ordinary branches of educa-

tion, she commenced the French language, which was a favourite study, and continued in China, even after she had undertaken a far more difficult task. Her ready obedience and constant application endeared her to the ladies conducting this school, and she carried off a beautiful prize in Milton's works, ere she left them for home duties at the early age of fifteen.

Nor was the beautiful scenery surrounding her home without its influence on Mary's mind, in her school days and during the following years. She delighted in rambles on the banks of Windermere, or on the hills above Ayside, where gazing over the vale of Cartmel, she had one of the most lovely of those views for which the "Lake District" is famous. Her soul held communion with nature, and luxuriated in the magnificence of its various aspects, as lake and field, forest and mountain, met her eye. The ferns and wild flowers at her feet were objects of deep interest; and the seasons stamped images of beauty on her mind, as the snows of winter melted into verdant spring, and the warm breath of summer cooled down mid the ripened harvests and fading leaves of autumn. How ardently she loved natural beauty, we learnt long after, when Mary would gather rare ferns on the old walls of Canton, and press

the feathery bamboo leaf plucked as it waved over the grave of our first-interred! Physically, she profited by her love of hill and stream, and breathing that fine bracing air, she gained robust health. Often, in after days, she spoke of merry races with friends and brothers, and of the agility, almost boyish, that bore her up the mountain side, or over the flowery meadow, as swiftly as any of the youthful band.

At fifteen she was called to assist in the work of a large household, and in educating younger sisters and brothers. Her affectionate spirit, ever seeking to add to the comfort of each, made her greatly beloved; so that young as she was, Mary was ever in request when instruction or advice was needed. Her mental energy had a firm basis in her will, but sometimes an impetuosity of temper was a source of grief both to others and herself. She lamented and battled with this failing, which to the family seemed her only one; though doubtless, had we her own confessions as to the state of her heart from fifteen to seventeen, we should hear of *many* sins against God.

After her conversion, she grieved over the sins and follies of her early youth, and looked with a stern eye on things usually styled "failings;" but as yet she had not learned the sinfulness of her own nature. Her heart, lovely

as her tempers usually were, needed the regenerating influences of Divine grace.

Her intellect was expanding in the warm, sunny atmosphere of Home; fed by reading and intelligent conversation with her father, her mind craved intellectual work as its permanent employment, and she soon began to think of engaging in tuition. What she longed for before her conversion, became a ruling desire in her soul after that grand event of her life; it then embraced the idea not merely of congenial employment, but of the highest usefulness to those who might come under her care.

As to the teachings and hallowed influences of the parental roof-tree, this chapter had best close in her own words. After leaving home, she wrote to her sister: "We were taught to mind the one thing needful. We were ever taught by example, as well as precept, the great aim of life." Nobly was parental duty done; rich its reward in such a testimony!

Respecting the younger children, she says to her parents: "O keep them as long as you can under the sweet, hallowing influences of that home;—the teaching, training, formation of good habits there,—the good effects of which are with me every step I take." Again she writes:

“Dear mamma, I am so thankful for the sweets of a religious training, and Christian experience! Dear, dear papa! how can I love him enough for his great kindness to me? What a privilege I have in such a father and mother! How can I repay you?”



III. CONVERSION AND TRAINING.

"Henceforth then,
It matters not if storms or sunshine be
My earthly lot—bitter or sweet my cup;
I only pray—'God fit me for the work.
God make me holy, and my spirit nerve
For the stern hour of strife!'"—REV. N. BROWN.

IN October of the year 1859, special services were held at Backbarrow by Mr. John Roberts, a man of great worth and usefulness, during which many were turned by the Holy Spirit into paths of peace; among them was Mary Gunson. Her parents scarcely knew how it occurred. She had lived from childhood in an atmosphere of prayer, nor was she ignorant of the way of life, and when the Spirit of God, giving unusual power to His word, entered her heart, it was melted into penitence and yielded to the Saviour. No one noticed anything disturbing her mind, till one night she was missing from the supper table, and inquiry being made, Mary was not to be found. Afterwards, she confessed that on returning from Chapel that evening she had retired to wrestle with God for the pardon of sin. Then, or some time during that week of prayer, she received that great blessing, and henceforth became so changed,

that all—parents and friends—took knowledge of her that she had been with Jesus.

With the renewed nature, came stronger desires of devoting herself to teaching; new motives, stronger incentives, stirred her heart, and she resolved to give herself to this work.

An application made to the Wesleyan Educational Committee, in the usual way, was favourably responded to, and she then studied in order to qualify herself to pass the examination required of every candidate previous to admission to the Normal College at Westminster. She spent some time at Ulverstone, under the instruction of Mr. Moss, the Wesleyan Schoolmaster there, and soon attained the requisite qualifications. The Rev. M. C. Taylor thus testifies of her attainments when she passed the preparatory examinations: "Miss Gunson had not had the advantage of a Pupil Teacher's training in our elementary schools, yet such had been her diligence in the use of her opportunities, that she gained a Queen's scholarship of the second class upon her first attempt."

All her energies had been bent upon achieving this object, and by God's blessing she succeeded. A new phase of life now opened out to her hopeful gaze; a work was before her for which she might become well qualified,

and in which she might be useful in the highest and noblest way.

In January, 1860, Mary left the kindly home of her infancy and girlhood, and came under the judicious training of our Normal College authorities, at Westminster. Kind hearts, however, were there to receive her, yet her outward circumstances were vastly different. What a change from the scenery and pure air at the foot of Windermere, to the fog and polluted atmosphere of London! From communion with nature in the country, to the close and constant intercourse of man with man in the crowded city! Mary had made up her mind to work, however; and that, too, despite the various difficulties which might appear in her way. Her religious principles, which at her conversion seem to have sprung to a rich maturity, were not left at home; but became her stay and help in her daily studies under these new and altered circumstances. From her own letters I can draw largely now to aid in forming an estimate of the grace of God in her.

After the initiatory difficulties are over, she is soon heard saying to her sister: "Dear Agnes, I am very happy here; and I feel I am getting on pretty well with my studies." And, lest all love of flowers should die out, next comes reference to a bunch of crocuses bought

in the street, which put in a mug in her little room, "bloom beautifully." "I have been so used to see flowers," is the clue to this little act. Then to another sister: "I think, dear Ellie, that He is deepening the work of grace in my soul. I have more pleasure in religious ordinances, both public and private. I thirst to know more of my Saviour. I want 'a heart in every thought renewed, and full of love divine.' Let us still press forward, and get ripe for our Lord's coming. O that we could always pray; even among our secular duties, feel our hearts are lifted up in silent prayer to heaven!"

The spring is well advanced, and Mary writes to her mother: "I am getting greatly attached to some dear ones here, they are so kind and good. All last week was set apart to especial prayer for the baptism of the Holy Spirit. We had a prayer meeting every night, which is and must be followed by good. At our usual little prayer meeting on Sunday afternoon we had a very sweet time. One of the dear ladies had just lost a friend by death, and, telling us of it, softened all, and hallowed the very room where we met. I hope you will never forget to pray for me. I am still as busy as ever—study, study, just as much as ever I can do, and sometimes rather more; but I

think I am getting on pretty well. I manage to keep up with the rest. I never thought I should be able to sing; but now a little hope is dawning. Drawing I am delighted with." And then she adds; "George's description of the country—the fields and hedges all so green and lovely—made me long to be there."

One Saturday afternoon in June, from the quiet of her room on the fifth storey in the College buildings, to her sister she says: "Where shall I begin? my heart is full of Home." But she presently dwells on spiritual things: "Dear Ellie, I do beg for advice on this matter of entire sanctification. I have been seeking it ever since I came to Westminster. Sometimes I feel I could take Him at His word, and accept the proffered gift, and then I feel cold again—cold and half-hearted. I have been endeavouring lately to give myself wholly to Him. It is His Spirit alone that upholds me in the hour of sore temptation.

"He calls my wandering spirit back,
When I forsake His ways;
And leads me, for His mercy's sake,
In paths of truth and grace."

He is very long-suffering towards me; though I am so cold, He does not desert me. We have been expecting a great revival at the College; every year they have had one before this time.

O that God would look upon us in mercy, and send a pentecostal shower! such a blessing that there shall not be room to contain it! O that He would send it soon—now, just now!”

A few weeks spent at home at Midsummer, and then her studies were resumed. Her affectionate spirit craves “good long letters” from her mother and sisters, while she on her part writes to them fully of both her outward and inward state. Referring to a letter from Mr. Roberts, she says: “I have read it more than once or twice. O what sweet words it contains! They bring such solemnity to my mind; and new promises and resolves are formed to live nearer to God and strive to be more like Jesus. I long to see Mr. Roberts again; I feel I have very much to thank him for. We had such a delightful meeting on Sunday afternoon! There was such deep feeling—such a hallowing, sanctifying power; the room was filled with His glory! I felt so softened, and had such a view of my own unworthiness and sinfulness! But, dear Ellie, I do not get entirely satisfied, I feel a longing for something I do not possess; I pant for something loftier, holier, even the perfect love of Jesus. His presence can dispel the clouds which darken my path. What an encouragement to have the prayers of Mr. Roberts

ascending on high on my behalf! I feel the duties here press rather heavily upon me; sometimes I can scarcely see a way through the many lessons, and I fear and tremble for the certificate at Christmas; but I must plod on in patience. My health on the whole has been very good, though I have frequent headaches, the effect of study; and it must be so if I intend to succeed, and I should not like to fail."

She did succeed, and sagely adds, when giving the result of the year to her parents: "Reward after hard work is always sweet." Mr. Sugden's statement runs thus: "At the close of her first year's training she secured a place in the second class of candidates for certificates of merit, which was highly honourable to her. In the examination on religious knowledge, conducted by the Revs. R. S. Hardy and E. Lightwood, she stood the sixth of her year."

Her success is recorded with thankfulness and hope; she was glad, also, because of the credit it reflected on her instructors and the College.



IV. TRAINING AND DESIGNATION.

“Why live I here? The vows
Of God are on me, and I may not stop
To play with shadows, or pluck earthly flowers,
Till I my work have done, and rendered up
Account. The voice of my departed Lord,
'Go teach all nations,' from the *Eastern* world
Comes on the night air, and awakes my ear,
And I will go.” ANON.

AFTER refreshing rest at home, Mary entered on the second year's course in good health, with “new stimulus” to her mind, and with “much interest” in the new studies allotted to her, especially history and astronomy. In religious knowledge, she determined to aim at the first class. She speaks of studying the being and attributes of God with a “mind elevated in contemplating One so great, so infinite in His perfections;” and adds, “may my knowledge of Him increase my love to Him! His glory must be the first aim of my life, and all other things sink into nothing before it; and in comparison with it, everything must be subordinate.”

As the summer advanced, a general indisposition seems to have pervaded the College. One student died, and another had to return

home ill. Mary felt "sick headaches, as of old, rather troublesome." The authorities were led to think that some release from hard study in a vitiated atmosphere, like that of Westminster under the summer sun, was necessary, and accordingly something like a picnic at Dulwich was planned.

The solemn call by one passing away, was not unheard by Mary. She writes: "I have been stirred up to more spiritual earnestness and determination to build on the Rock, Christ Jesus. I would prefer the giving up of all I have, even my life, rather than lose the comforting presence and love of my *precious*, most precious Saviour and friend. He is my stay and support:

"O God! our help in ages past,
Our hope for years to come,
Our shelter from the stormy blast,
And our eternal home."

We sang that hymn just after Mr. Lawson's death, and it pierced my heart to the very core. I felt when the reaper was busy gathering up the sheaves cut down by the sickle of death, that in the encircling arms of my Saviour alone was there repose and safety."

The whole band of students tripping it to Dulwich and Sydenham for a little fresh air, was thus effected: "We went down by train,

and then had a most beautiful walk of two miles along shady lanes. I felt as free as a bird; it was just like home, with all the trees in their summer dress. We wandered through Dulwich Woods, which are very extensive. After this, we went to the College Picture Gallery at Dulwich. Some of the most splendid pictures are there, by celebrities in the art of painting—Rubens, Raphael, Murillo, &c.; they are indeed gems, and it was quite a high privilege to see them. After we had regaled ourselves with bread and butter and such beautiful fresh milk, Mr. Taylor proposed another walk; we assented joyfully, and started for Beckenham. In the old church there, we saw a beautiful tablet to the memory of Hedley Vicars, over the communion table. The design so suitable—a sword and shield and an ear of full ripe corn with the inscription, ‘Immediately He putteth in the sickle.’ Miss Marsh lives there, the author of ‘English Hearts and English Hands,’ &c. From Beckenham we had another delightful walk to the station; and reached the College well tired, and ready for the nice tea prepared for us. You need not fear for me, dear mamma; I am indeed wonderfully well. The authorities are all so kind and indulgent; they have arranged the classes so that we shall have three hours on Monday morning for recreation.”

Mary's Midsummer holidays passed over, and she was again at Westminster, quietly but energetically pursuing her last half year's studies; hoping, probably, to stand fairly with her compeers at the end of the year, and then receive an appointment to a school in some part of England. It was to be otherwise: an unseen hand was about to beckon her into a path that led to the farther East, and point her to a work among a heathen people.

In connection with the Wesleyan Mission at Canton, a Girls' school had been established, and promised fair to be an important auxiliary to the mission. Its originator had been nearly ten years in China, and the necessity for a temporary return to England had become apparent. "The Ladies' Committee for Ameliorating the Condition of Women in Heathen Countries" had already thrown their fostering care over that school, and by their annual grant Mrs. Piercy had been enabled to keep it up. Anticipating her own return to England, she applied to the Ladies' Committee for a properly-qualified teacher, and they expressed their willingness to send out such a one so soon as she could be found. Their choice fell on Miss Gunson. Foreign work was mentioned to her, and a school in India or China spoken of as what the Ladies' Committee would like her to undertake.

The matter was viewed by her as of gravest moment, and she gave it her most prayerful thought: her decision was to accept the appointment, if her parents approved. From a letter to her sister, dated the 30th August, I learn that she had some preference for India; but she adds: "I have no choice, I feel thus—Behold the servant of the Lord, do with me as seemeth good in Thy sight. Here I am, Lord, send me." When the secretaries, Mrs. Hoole and Miss Farmer, asked if she were willing to go to China, her reply was instantly and calmly given: "If you determine on sending me there, I shall consider it as the will of God."

But the consent of parents had to be sought; and if Mary, from the purest principle of duty, and in the exercise of a lofty faith, could resolve on giving her services to Christ in a heathen land, were her parents equally ready to sanction such a step? To their honour be it said, they were! but Mary must tell how their approval was given and how received. What heroism of faith in this home-loving, whole-hearted girl! "When papa's letter came, I was almost in extasies, and ran with all speed to Miss Bagley to communicate the joyful tidings. I did not expect opposition; but such a full, cheerful, kind-hearted, sympathetic compliance almost overpowered me. O how thankful I felt for

such a precious father ! And mamma's letter, too, came the same morning. I scarcely knew where I was—I was almost wild ; my excitable nature will break out on certain occasions. I know you have been praying for me ; I felt supernaturally calm after the burst of joy had passed."

This "burst of joy !" Let us look at it a moment. Had it gushed forth on obtaining the consent of her parents to a union with a man of worth, to whom her heart's best affections were already given, and who would lead her to a home in some lovely spot on her natal soil ; no marvel ! This would have been a natural outburst ; many have had such. But this affectionate girl of nineteen to be "almost in extasies" because allowed to exile herself from home and all its charms, to become a stranger in a strange land, to dwell among a people of "hard speech" and exclusive spirit, is marvellous ! something *super-natural* is here. And Mary's heart had not been preoccupied with desires for missionary work, nor with romantic notions of sitting under a shady palm, teaching a group of heathen children ; she had not longed for years, as some have, for her way to open into the mission field ; but when this toil and self-sacrifice unexpectedly comes before her, and her parents' affections—warm as her

own—are hushed to acquiescence in the step, their consent to her life of exile on a foreign shore is received as “joyful tidings.” “Most marvellous!” says some one. “Surely there is romance now. Does she not with joy accept she knows not what?” Well, but let us see whether her cheek will blanch at the first real difficulty, or will she surmount it, and all others in the genuine spirit of Christian discipleship? “Christian discipleship of a high order she undoubtedly had, but was there the lofty self-abnegation of the true missionary spirit?” our querist may ask. To any such inquiry we may reply. The two are identical. Never has the missionary spirit risen to a higher consecration than entire Christian discipleship; a consecration required of all who profess to be disciples. It is no work of supererogation to engage in missionary work abroad. Entire consecration of heart is the mark for each believer in Christ; but can this consecration stint time, or means, or strength in Christ’s service? Can it say *where* it won’t go to serve Him? Nay, verily, it will accept from Christ *joyfully* an appointment “to the farthest verge of the green earth.” This we take to be what Mary had attained to; and hence this “burst of joy” from her young heart when parents sanctioned her entering the foreign department of Christian

effort. Does my reader feel that he could not gladly serve Christ *anywhere*? Then we doubt, not his being a disciple, but his whole-hearted discipleship.

Soon after this, Mary writes to her mother: "I want to hear from you so very much; my heart often says, 'I am afraid dear mamma does not like the idea of China,' and many such things it would fearfully whisper; but you know if the Lord appoints me to go there, it must be the right place. Yes, all will be well; and I shall have the strength imparted to me that I so much need, and I may be the humble instrument of bringing many dear ones unto glory, who will be stars in my crown of rejoicing.

"My dearest mamma, I have a sweet trust and peace, and also most precious seasons of communion with my Jesus. I feel He is fitting me for my work, and know His blood shall cleanse me from all sin. In the recesses of my soul there is a well-spring of joy and peace; a calm resting, watching, and waiting to be led in the right way."

Mary continued to the end of 1861 at the College, with the double end in view, of completing her period of training, and gaining as full a preparation for her departure to China as she could. With this additional pressure on

her mind, she strove to pass the examination creditably. Her feelings may be gathered from another extract of a letter to her parents: "I feel the reality is drawing near, and I must equip myself as far as possible for the warfare. O my dear father! when I look at it the difficulties are immense; but there is a dear lady, Mrs. Piercy, at Canton, with whom I shall live. Mrs. Piercy was trained at Westminster, she was the first female student that entered the College. I shall have the privilege and benefit of her teaching, which will be of the greatest advantage to me. The examinations and this great undertaking are almost more than I can bear, and if I had not Divine strength to rely on, I should be ready to despair. I am certain I am in the path of duty, and by the grace and assistance of the Holy Spirit shall set myself cheerfully to the work of preparation. I long to be in the work. Dear parents, now more than ever do I feel the need of much grace. O bear me up in prayer that I may be supported under the trial of separation from all dear to my heart in this life! I am but a weak, frail mortal; while I am writing tears flow fast: but the sacrifice is for my Father, and He will reward me an hundred-fold in this present life, and in the world to come give *life everlasting*. I sometimes feel I cannot leave *you*; but my

way has been made so plain, I cannot but give up all for Jesus. He is my all in all ; the altogether lovely to my soul !

‘ Take my soul and body’s powers ;
Take my memory, mind, and will ;
All my goods, and all my hours,
All I know, and all I feel ;
All I think, or speak, or do ;
Take my heart ;—but make it new !”

I shall, if there is any one in London from whom I can learn Chinese, have to stay here the most of my time. It is a great disappointment ; I had been hoping to spend most of my time at home, the dearest spot on earth to me. I have not heard any particulars either about my outfit, or the time of my departure, so I conjecture that I shall not sail till spring. If I get a certificate, it will be of no use to me abroad ; but for the credit of the College, I will do my best. I have been blest with excellent health this year, and I cannot be too thankful to God.”

At the end of her second year, Miss Gunson obtained a place in the third class in the Government Examination, and also a prize for skill in drawing. In the Religious Knowledge Examination, she again stood in the second class. Mr. Sugden, the head master, further adds : “ Her character as a student was throughout

creditable to her ; not reaching the very highest rank, but uniformly giving satisfaction to myself and her other teachers."

The Rev. M. C. Taylor, who had excellent opportunities of ascertaining her general religious character during the whole term of her student-teacher's life, writes thus: " Her two years of student life were very even and uniform ; she was always the same unselfish, affectionate, winning girl ; always attentive to her work, and apparently always actuated by one spirit of fidelity to God. Perfect peace dwelt in her as a fountain, and she seemed to rejoice evermore in doing kindnesses, in bearing other's burdens, and in making manifest the savour of Christ. No one could help esteeming and loving her."

Thus brightly shone out the flame of Divine love which burnt so strongly within. Dear young reader, be it thine to win such esteem, such love, by thy consistent and holy conduct !

Mary's next work was a few hours' study of the symbols of the Chinese language, under the direction of an American missionary, who was temporarily residing in London ; and she speaks of writing one lesson *five* times over before she could satisfy herself. Then she went home to spend a few weeks with her parents and

brothers and sisters, ere she bade them farewell,
and departed on her long journey.

“ I may no longer doubt,
To give up all my friends and idol hopes,
And every tender tie that binds my heart
To thee, my country !”



V. THE VOYAGE.

"I saw her on the strand. Beside her smiled
Her native land, and her beloved home,
With all their pageantry of light and shade,
Streamlet and vale. There stood her childhood's friends,
Sweet sisters, who had shared her inmost thoughts,
And saintlike parents, whose example raised
Those thoughts to heaven. It was a strong array!
And the fond heart clung to its rooted loves.
But Christ had given it panoply, which earth
Might never overthrow."—MRS. SIGOURNEY.

THE keenest sorrow of parting was passed through in her native village, as she left those loved ones, and started for London in the middle of March, 1862. Some relatives there watched over her, and helped most kindly in her final arrangements. On the 18th of March, Miss Gunson embarked on the "Ballarat," a ship bound to Shanghai. There were three other ladies, fellow passengers; one, Miss Ashwell, was to accompany her all the way to Canton, and become the wife of the Rev. John S. Parkes. The vessel did not leave the Thames till the 22nd, during which time Mary had an opportunity of making the acquaintance of her fellow voyagers, seven adults and four children, and of getting her cabin comfortably arranged for the voyage. Again, though by letter, she

could bid adieu to her parents and friends ere her departure ; and her loving spirit still sought to comfort her mother's heart by asking for continual prayer, at once the greatest solace to those left, and the greatest help to the one gone.

“Pray for me still, my dear mamma and friends. I know that He who has been sufficient in the past is sufficient for all that is to come. I have a sweet trust in Him, and all, I know, will be well :—‘As thy days, so shall thy strength be.’ I long to reach the end of my journey, and to commence the work before me. O may I do it successfully, that the Lord may be glorified in and through me! Good bye, my dearest mamma; may every blessing rest upon you, and may many, many years be yet added to your life!”

Thus Mary left her native land, and the ship sped on its voyage. For some days she suffered, as she had expected, from sea sickness; but she was soon able to employ herself usefully, and feel more at home in her new position. With the godly of her companions she soon took sweet counsel. In a letter dated April 4th, she says of a Scotch lady on board: “She is a Christian indeed. I seem to be drawn towards her, and we pass many a pleasant hour in sweet Christian fellowship—in

telling each other's trials and triumphs through Jesus; and when speaking of His goodness our hearts burn within us with a holy fervour, which is as oil to a lamp. In the evenings, when gazing on the mighty deep, and meditating on the Omnipotent Creator, my soul is drawn out in praise. Sometimes God seems so near, the thought fills me with awe and reverence, so that I scarcely can move. O, these are indeed precious seasons, and the beneficial effects are felt long after!"

The sunsets at sea enchant her, as they have done many a voyager. In the same letter she writes: "I have been too idle as yet to rise early enough to see the sunrise. But the sunsets surpass my expectations; all the poet's imagination and painter's art are nothing when the original is before you in all its magnificence and splendour. Last night I sat wrapt in reverie as the sun gradually dropt like an immense ball of fire below the horizon, kindling it with orient gold. It was glorious! Nothing to interfere with your vision, no hills or dales—but down, down it goes; you can see it sink beneath the dark blue waters, while one long stream of golden light flows from the horizon to the ship. Yesterday we passed Madeira, but were too far from the island to see it."

Favouring winds bore the vessel onward,

and the Cape of Good Hope was passed, south of which "a dreadful shaking about we got," says Mary. "For the first time I saw waves rise mountains high—you might imagine that the vessel would be completely swamped; but like a gallant bark she mounted and rode the immense swell, in a manner which surprised Captain Jones and his officers. The waves came dashing over the poop, and filled the saloon with water. One morning I was sleeping in happy ignorance, when Miss A. awoke me by asking where all the water in our cabin had come from. On raising my head from the pillow, I saw skirts, shoes, stockings, &c., all floating about in a foot of water. We hastily threw on our dresses, left our hair hanging loose, and without shoes or stockings climbed upon the boxes. 'Pitiable objects!' You would have said, had you seen us. Just as we had thus disposed of ourselves, the sailors came into the saloon with buckets to bale out the water, which was done in half an hour. When all was got out, but little harm was done; the first fine day we put our clothes upon a line, and they were soon dry."

"A few mornings after the preceding occurrence, we ladies had managed to reach the deck, and were seated on the skylight, with a rope tied before us by which to hold when the

vessel rolled. Mrs. Bailey's little girl had been placed by my side, and little dreading our danger, we were exclaiming, 'O, look at that spray! how grand!' when there came a tremendous wave from behind, too suddenly for any intimation to be given us. On it came, covering the deck, and I, one hand holding the little girl, missing the rope with the other, down I slid over the deck to the side of the ship, with dear little Fanny still clasped to my breast. Then to crown all, the big wave, receding, washed over us, so we were well saturated. By the help of a sailor I regained my seat, but not in a very comfortable state, having to sit in my dripping clothes for about two hours. There was no help for it—there I must remain; all was confusion below, another such a scene as I have before described, but much worse, was going on in the saloon."

This letter, written in June, closes thus: "The weather for the last fortnight has been very squally, with heavy showers of rain and snow; the latter in such abundance that the young gentlemen were snowballing each other."

The time passed away pleasantly; for, with a captain "uniformly kind and gentlemanly," no swearing among the ship's crew, and passengers disposed to make the best of a monotonous life, much quiet enjoyment can be found

even on board ship. And Mary looked forward. "Every day is bringing us nearer the warm latitudes. In spite of all the inconveniences of cold weather, I shall say farewell to it very reluctantly; knowing that many a time I shall long for the cool, invigorating air we have lately enjoyed, when, with heated brow, I shall be poring over my Chinese studies at Canton."

In another letter, written towards the end of June, in the Indian ocean, home is dwelt on, and her unselfish, loving spirit comes out sweetly. "This month you will be haymaking. It seems so strange to me; not a thing visible to tell me of the passage of the summer season, usually a time of such enjoyment to me. All the flowers around and at my home blooming and fading, and my midsummer passed far from them; but still fancy loves to picture them, and brings an amount of pleasure, though small in comparison to times gone by. You will be taking your summer trip up the lake. I do hope this summer will be one of unbroken pleasure to you all; and when enjoying each other's smiling, happy faces, think sometimes of the *lonely, absent* one, and let a silent prayer ascend for me from your loving hearts. Let not a thought of regret nullify your happiness: I am about my Father's business, and when

this is completed, I hope to be permitted to return to you all with joy.

‘Absence makes the heart grow fonder.’

I feel it does. It reveals to us the silver cords of love encircling our hearts in bonds of union, so sweet, even though severed by a short parting, to be one day more firmly reunited than ever. Then never more shall ‘farewell’ pass our lips; we shall be gathered home into ‘*one fold*,’ under ‘*one shepherd*.’ United here by Jesus’ grace, we shall reign with Him for ever above. Good bye! My *kindest, best, dearest* love to all. I cannot think just now of any more superlatives, and they would not express all I feel.”

On the 27th of June, the “Ballarat,” entered the straits of Sunda, and on the 28th passed Anger. For three months, Mary has gazed on nothing but sky and blue water. Let us hear her joyous utterances as she first sees one of the “Spice Islands.” “Java rose before us, at first as a mere outline of mountain range, clad in fresh spring-green from the water’s edge to its loftiest summit. As we came nearer, the vegetation became visible, one unbroken mass of forest trees, so thick that no stems could be seen, only one mass of leaves sparkling with innumerable colours as the sun

shone upon them. It was a splendid sight! As we rounded Java head, the Straits gradually widened; the hills were completely clothed as far as the eye could reach. We could distinguish the tall cocoa-nut trees, with their tufts of fruit and leaves on the summit; also trees distinguishable among the mass by their scarlet blossoms,* like clusters of rosy-cheeked apples hanging from the laden boughs. The whole scene was enchanting, especially to our hungry, longing eyes. It was well worth coming to see, and enduring all the tossing and seasickness, for that refreshing first-view of land. It is impossible for one who has not been deprived of it, to imagine the joy it brings. I again felt there was something real, tangible, and not the ever-moving, rolling water. A rich fragrance was wafted to us on the breeze from odoriferous shrubs, for which Java is so much noted. We seemed to revel in the sweet balmy atmosphere, as the stag on the mountain summit sniffs his pure native air. Every face wore such a calm, satisfied, good-tempered expression! I dare say mine did its duty, if it were at all an index to the heart and emotions."

* These were most probably cotton trees, *Bombax Ceiba*, which attain a majestic size; before the cotton is ripe and shed out on the ground, where it lies like driven snow, the bright scarlet husks have this appearance.

The vessel anchored for a few hours at Anger, and Mary tasted the plantain and other tropical fruits. From thence she had a pleasant passage, with favouring monsoon, up the China sea, and the vessel safely arrived at Shanghai on the 18th of July. Mary gladly stepped on shore there, though she had yet 800 miles to travel ere she reached her destination. Sixteen days were spent at Shanghai, during which time she was kindly and hospitably entertained by Miss Jones, of the American Episcopal Mission, and made the acquaintance of many choice missionary friends. She saw her companion happily married, and took her initiatory lesson in speaking Chinese. Her first Sabbath in China, was a season of hallowed enjoyment. "I felt it," says she, "an unspeakable privilege once more to tread the courts of the Lord's house, and to join with the people of God in chanting His praises." Cholera was then raging at Shanghai, but she was graciously shielded from its power.

"With real regret at bidding farewell" to those kind friends, Mary left Shanghai on the 4th August, in the steamship "Cadiz," and by the same gracious providence which had cared for her hitherto, was brought safely to her journey's end; the little party of three reaching Canton on the 8th of that month. About four o'clock

of that day, on the deck of the river steamer, I first saw Miss Gunson, and having seated her in a boat, we soon reached what was to be her home. Here our personal acquaintance commenced, by her becoming an inmate of our house, and soon really one of the family; taking the fullest interest in our work, our sorrows, and our joys.



VI. ENTRY ON WORK.

“ Pray heaven for firmness, thy whole soul to bind
To this thy purpose—to begin, pursue,
With thoughts all fixed, and feelings purely kind;
Strength to complete, and with delight review,
And grace to give the praise where all is ever due.”

MISS GUNSON arrived at Canton at a season of unwonted distress and difficulty. On the 27th of the previous month a tremendous hurricane had passed over that city, and the adjacent country. Between twenty and thirty thousand Chinese had lost their lives, chiefly by drowning; hundreds of houses had fallen, and great distress prevailed. Two of our newly-erected mission-houses had been all but demolished by the typhoon, and four families had to be crowded into the remaining two dwellings. A rented house, near to the two in ruins, was occupied by my own family; and into this, inconvenient as it was, and far too small for six persons, Mary was received. My youngest child was seriously ill of disease, which soon terminated fatally. Thus distress all around, and in the family to which she had come, at once claimed and had Mary's sympathy and kindly help.

Eager to enter on the study of the language, she had to be restrained from making any great

mental effort during the very hot days of August ; for she had reached China at the season of the year most trying to new-comers ; and suffering, as we all were, from unusually debilitating weather, her ardent spirit had to be kept in check.

One of her first letters from Canton is to a younger sister, dated 14th August. " I have so much which I ought to tell, that really I am unable to find the end from which to unravel my ball of strange events ; but, dear Bessie, if I miss the right end, and they come out a little tangled,—a little of one and a little of another,—I know you will overlook it. . . . I am at last safely housed with Mr. Piercy's family ; but I arrived in the midst of great distress. What a dreadful storm they have had ! and we knew nothing of it till we got to Hong-kong ; there a letter in some measure prepared us for the desolation we met with, instead of the pleasant home we had anticipated. . . . I was very thankful to have letters awaiting me ; with what eagerness did I seize them, and gaze on the familiar writing once more ! And we can hear every fortnight ! that compensates for very much ; it spans the immense distance, and unites us still in one. Mr. Piercy's family consists of two boys and a little girl. There is some talk of their returning home directly ; for

Mr. and Mrs. Piercy's health is now suffering from the climate, and their little Hannah is worn to a shadow. I could not repine if they did go, but for their sakes greatly rejoice; yet it would make my work very much more responsible, and, till I am more conversant with the language, very difficult. But the greater my work, the greater the assistance and grace! They are very attentive to my health, and will not allow me to commence the *study* of the language till this hot weather is over. You can have no idea of the overpowering effects of the heat; though I am quietly writing, my clothes are wet through with perspiration. We go out somewhere on the river once a day, and the cool breeze in the evening is delicious.

"I have a girl for maid-servant, Apún by name: she does my room in the morning, and then attends the Girls' school till evening. She is not very attractive in appearance, but she is attentive to her books; when I was last in school she was among the most diligent. I am amused, and so would you be, at my efforts to make her understand what I want by signs, which are often mistaken; but she is willing, and is delighted at each new word I am able to speak in Chinese, though the attempt to do so is ludicrous. The girls in the school work most beautiful embroidery, in floss silk, on satin or

velvet. We are able in the evening, by crossing the river, to have a pleasant walk among the rice fields. On the banks which separate the fields, there are orange, peach, and lichi trees growing, and a shrub covered with scarlet blossoms, much like our peony.

“The rice fields look like ponds, or tarns, the plant being immersed in water during the earlier stages of its growth. The common people dress nearly alike,—the great difference is the style of dressing their hair,—the men wearing it in a long tail, and the women drawing it all behind into an oval-formed knot, through which is thrust gold and silver pins. The women, rich and poor, wear ear-rings,—these are an essential part of their dress. All they generally wear is a pair of wide trousers and a loose jacket or tunic. I like the dress; it is suitable for the climate, and becomes them.”

This brief account correctly describes the dress of the poor and working classes; that of the rich, and of the officials, is vastly more elaborate and ornamental. “No company of men appears more splendid than a large party of Chinese officers in their winter robes, made of different coloured crapes, trimmed with rich furs, and brilliant with gay embroidery.”*

How Mary set about her work will appear

* Williams' *Middle Kingdom*, vol. ii., page 33.

in the following extracts from a letter to her mother, four days after the preceding: "It is just *five* months to-day since I went on board ship at Gravesend: many have been the dangers through which I have passed since then; but through them all the Lord in His infinite mercy has safely brought me. Now I am settled in the scene of my future labours, which I am really commencing to-day; and I am to have the Chinese teacher an hour each day. I am anxious to get on with the language. In my first visit to the school, not being able to speak one word to the girls, I felt the real difficulty of a missionary's work,—*everything to learn*. But, dear mamma, my health is graciously preserved; and if this continues, I have not the least fear as to succeeding; others have done it, and why not I? With the Lord is all power, and each day I ask for strength and ability to conquer this mountain-difficulty, and that His blessing may rest on my studies.

"There is a very good Chapel here, and the Girls' school is held in the vestry at present; the proper School-room shared in the general ruin. O with what delight did I hear the Chinese girls sing 'Happy Land,' and 'Rock of Ages,' in their own tongue! It made tears of joy start to my eyes. I could not join them in Chinese, but did in English. Our Sundays here cannot

be spent after the home routine. We have an English prayer-meeting at 10 A.M. After that, till 12, we have the Chinese service in the chapel. The two Sundays I have been here I attended, though I could not understand a single word; but by going we encourage the women and girls to attend. After some time I hope to really enjoy it.

“The first Sunday after my arrival I accompanied Mrs. Piercy to her female meeting, consisting of Chinese Christian women and the eldest girls from the school. She translated what they said for me, and it did my heart good to hear of such trust and hope in God during the dreadful storm that had passed over them. There is indeed encouragement to work on. Then we have an English service in the evening, much like what you have at home. I enjoy these means of grace very much indeed. . . . I have been christened afresh, and my Chinese name is Kán Kú-neung, or Miss Kán. Chinese surnames are generally a single syllable, and there is no letter G in this dialect.

“Thank you, dear mamma, for your care of my little fernery. I have found one rare fern here, and pressed it. You see I am following my old practices; and why should we not eagerly seize upon these little innocent pleasures that God has so bountifully spread abroad in

the wide field of nature to shed joy upon our path, and that we may in each little leaf trace the Divine hand and workmanship? These are pleasures which I do not intend to slight, and which will not interfere with, or make my usefulness the less. On Tuesday evening, I had a long walk with Mr. Piercy on the city wall, from which we had a fine view of the city, and—what contributed most to the enjoyment of my walk—the top is covered with ferns, flowers, and beautiful shrubs, of which I brought home quite a bouquet. I send you two fern leaves; prize them, not so much for their beauty, as that they were gathered from a place once inaccessible to European feet, but where we now can roam at pleasure.

“I must say farewell, with kind love to papa. Ellie and George shall have letters next mail, if possible. I am, your loving daughter,

“POLLY, *alias* KAN KU-NEUNG.”

Intense indeed was Mary's love of nature's quiet nooks, as well as her more gorgeous apparelling. I know not whether she had ever read Wordsworth's lines, but she held the truth taught by him.

“Nature never did betray
The heart that lov'd her: 'tis her privilege,
Through all the years of this our life, to lead
From joy to joy: for she can so inform

The mind that is within us, so impress
With quietness and beauty, and so feed
With lofty thoughts, that neither evil tongues,
Rash judgments, nor the sneers of selfish men,
Nor greetings where no kindness is, nor all
The dreary intercourse of daily life,
Shall e'er prevail against us, or disturb
Our cheerful faith that all which we behold
Is full of blessings."

Still her greatest joys were in her work, and it astonished us how soon she gained the power of using to good purpose her first acquirements of the language. On the 6th of September, she writes: "What do you think? Last Sunday I actually was able to sing 'Happy Land' through in Chinese with the girls! They seemed quite proud of my attainments. O what a cause of rejoicing it was to me! It seemed to join our spirits in one, and the whole ascended to heaven in one chorus of praise. It lessened the distance between us, which struck me so forcibly on my first visit to the school—when not able to say *one* word. Now I am learning 'Rock of Ages' to sing with them next Sunday. Their voices are shrill and high, but by no means disagreeable. There are thirty-four names on the books, though not all in regular attendance. They learn the First and Second Catechisms, and commit much of the Scriptures to memory, especially the Gospels. Mrs. Piercy had a class

of the girls come to the house, and it was very amusing and pleasing to hear them recite. Two little girls turned their backs to her, and went through the whole of the First Catechism, alternately, with very few mistakes. This is not unusual; some can do more. We hope these important truths are in some measure understood, and as they grow up will have a good influence on their lives."

On the 22nd September, she refers to her health and her charge: "I am still enjoying excellent health; the weather is much cooler now; the worst trial, the hot weather, is past, and I am looking forward to a winter of usefulness, if my health is graciously spared. I attend the school from three to four o'clock, and overlook the writing in Roman letters, set copies, &c. This is all I am able to do as yet; but I am getting able to talk a few sentences, and make my girls understand in some measure. I am very happy; there is such affection in the girls, they always greet me with a smile. Thank the Lord with me, who has prepared the people's hearts to receive me. My only desire is to do them good, and show them how Christians ought to live. They are my sheep, and I their earthly shepherd. I live for them—my life is devoted to my school. My heartfelt prayer is to be able to lead them to Jesus. I have felt

the necessity of having a pious teacher, the present one is not yet a Christian. I have prayed much for her,* O, I long for the light of the Holy Spirit to enlighten her darkness, and make known to her the things of God ! It is so necessary that her influence should be for good in the school."

On the 30th of October, she wrote to Mrs. Hoole ; a short extract from that letter runs thus : " My time from nine to twelve each morning, is occupied by lessons from my Chinese teacher and by private studies. I cannot report much progress yet ; but during the winter when the weather is cool and invigorating, I hope to improve rapidly in the Chinese language, if such a thing be possible. I am anxious on Mrs. Piercy's return home, to be in some measure prepared to take upon myself the responsibility of the school. It will be impossible for me to fill her place for some years to come ; for this I now wish my arrival had been a year earlier. I shall do all I can, but that at the most is little. I am much pleased with the attention and obedience of the girls : the two elder girls especially are very interesting."

• She remarks on a trip to several parts of the city in November : " We were sight-seeing

* The Teacher became a Christian, and was baptized on the last Sabbath in 1863.

the greater part of the day. Saw temples, pagodas, colleges, the examination hall, &c. The Chinese are a highly-civilized people. We made the whole circuit of the city to the very outskirts of the northern wall, from which there is a most splendid view. The country is beautiful. Of course I could not walk so far, so I had a sedan chair ; but when we came to a beautiful hill it would not have been like me to sit in the chair when the others were climbing it and enjoying the splendid prospect. The sun came out with great power as we ascended, and I have had to pay dearly for my imprudence, as I have been out of order ever since, but am now almost well. I was very weary when we returned home."

Still her health continued very vigorous ; for after this she says to her parents, "All the English residents here look with astonishment at me : you would be delighted to see me looking so well ; I think, if anything, I am stouter."

Her twenty-first birthday was a happy day ; and Christmas also came and passed pleasantly. On the 30th December, Mary wrote to Miss Farmer : "Our school is still prospering. Fortunately the Chinese teacher is a good one ; she* is now a candidate for baptism. O that the seed sown may be watered from on high, and that she may become a true follower of Jesus !

On Christmas day we prepared a treat for the children. Both schools, boys and girls, assembled in the morning in the chapel, where Mr. Piercy addressed them. You would have been delighted to hear how beautifully they sang 'Hark! the herald angels sing,' and another simple hymn which they all would understand, 'Christ is born in Bethlehem.' After the meeting they adjourned to the two school-rooms where cakes, tea, and fruit, were prepared for them. It was a pleasant sight to look upon their beaming faces as each received a share. Some of their faces, though different from ours in form and hue, are really attractive when lighted up with joy, the eye sparkling with intelligence. I hope some day to see those same faces in the realms above, as jewels in some one's crown.

We have had great difficulty in gaining the consent of Ho-tsing's mother to her baptism. A'fün's baptism has been delayed, as we wish these two girls to be baptized together. To-day some of the difficulties have been removed, and we hope that the baptism will take place shortly."

Miss Gunson had the pleasure of witnessing the baptism of these two girls on January 15th, 1863. They had long given evidence of a gracious work of the Spirit on their hearts. One of them had met with much opposition

from her mother, who at last only reluctantly gave consent to her daughter's baptism. She was invited to be present at the ordinance, but declined, though placing no further hindrance in her daughter's way.

The Mission Schools were dismissed on the 3rd of February, as the Chinese new year was approaching, at which there is a grand national holiday, and all schools have a recess for about a month. Mary quite enjoyed the dismissal service: "To me it was an exceedingly pleasant time. We entered the chapel, and joined a hundred and twenty-six boys in singing that lovely hymn,—

‘There is a land of pure delight.’

All these boys have been brought from poor, wretched homes where sin and idolatry reign. Now, they know something of heaven, and can sing of it with the understanding. They really sing well; the Pupil Teachers lead the boys beautifully. Is not the work sweet? These boys filled the centre of the chapel; one surrounding row of seats had been reserved for the missionary friends and the parents of the children. Mr. Piercy gave rewards, consisting of books and articles of dress. To the first class some money was given, (from a special source.) Every boy received something. Dr.

Legge, from Hong-kong, then addressed them ; but I was not Chinese scholar enough to understand much. After this we adjourned to the vestry, where the girls awaited us. Thirty were arranged to receive their rewards ; more in number than any previous year. All looked so happy and clean, that it was a very pleasing sight. The faces of some of the little ones had been daubed with rouge. I shall do my best to get rid of this custom ; but we have very little control over them, as they are only day scholars. As it is not easy to get them to come, we are glad to receive them painted or unpainted, being anxious to reach their hearts and implant some good thing there. Each girl was presented with a *shám*, an upper garment, somewhat like a jacket. Those whose conduct had been particularly good received books also."

From these statements made so freely to those whom she loved, it clearly appears how well fitted Mary was for her work, and how happy she was in it. Studious, applying herself energetically to the language, and using every acquisition in it as soon as gained, at once winning the attention and love of her pupils, and bearing their spiritual interests continually on her heart, we soon felt that Miss Gunson, was eminently qualified for her work, and rejoiced in hope of her great usefulness.

VII. SPIRIT AND CHARACTER.

" They are sowing the seed of word and deed,
Which the cold know not, nor the careless heed ;
Of the gentle word and the kindest deed
That have blessed the heart in its sorest need ;
Sweet will the harvest be."

IN this chapter I would fain bring out something further illustrative of the exceeding loveliness of Miss Gunson's character as a Christian. We have seen her thoroughly devoted to her work. What was she in the family ? She came an entire stranger to us ; but soon her kindly sympathies greatly endeared her to all. Very retiring and reserved in manner, yet ever gladly rendering any assistance she could, she soon had a sister's place in our hearts, and became really a member of the family. I have alluded to a heavy family trial, which came soon after Mary's arrival. Her second letter from Canton to her mother was from " the house of mourning."

" We have only just returned from the funeral of little Jane Hannah, Mrs. Piercy's youngest child. She had been gradually sinking some time ; but for the last few days we hoped she was better. Yesterday, Mrs. Piercy and I took her out on the river ; during our sail she grew worse, and by the time we reached

home became quite insensible. We sent for Dr. Kerr, and Mrs. Piercy kept her on her knee till the last. O, it was such a sweet departure ! It was not death ! About half-an-hour before she expired, her countenance changed ; it seemed lit up with smiles from the land of spirits. She closed her eyes and seemed to be sleeping ; but it was the sleep which knows no waking on earth. She was clasped in the arms of Him who has said ‘Suffer the little children to come unto Me.’ She was a sweet little darling ; I almost felt a sister’s loss. One day is the longest time bodies can be kept here in the hot season, so to-day we have buried her. The same night she died we washed and dressed her for the last time, in pure spotless white, and laid her in her own little bed. To-day, after she was put into the coffin, we strewed a few white flowers over her, and kissed her for the last time. O, I felt so much ! It was the first little one I had seen die. May this event knit me to Jesus, and be a link of union with the land above ! It would have done your hearts good to have witnessed the sympathy of the Chinese Christians with Mrs. Piercy in her afflictions : the heathen Chinese would not touch a dead body ; but how Christianity has changed these hearts ! The old nurse wept as if her heart would break, and knelt by Mrs.

Piercy's side, holding her darling's feet and calling 'Hannah,' all the time she lay dying. I wept to see her grief. When the flowers were brought she lingered near the coffin, and gently put in and arranged one after another, seeming unable to leave her little charge. We took the body to the chapel; there the funeral service was read in English and a hymn sung; then a few verses read in Chinese and a native preacher prayed. All the scholars and others who wished were allowed to look at her, and then the coffin was closed up. The Chapel was full of missionaries, their families, and Chinese. When Mrs. Piercy withdrew to the vestry, the native Christian women crowded round her and sobbed aloud. I hope the good influence will not be lost upon them. There is much of recompense for toil, even in this life. If any body is loved, these people love Mr. and Mrs. Piercy, and would do anything they could for them.

"We went about four miles into the country; beautiful bamboo and other trees on either side of the way; under other circumstances, the scenery would have delighted me. A range of high hills are on the north of the burial ground, and seem a shelter for the graves: it is a very beautiful place. It was most painful to return home without her, though now only the clay remained."

A fortnight after this she writes: "I find in Mr. and Mrs. Piercy hearts full of deep sympathy and kindness for me. The deep sorrow I spoke of in my last has drawn us nearer to each other, and nearer to the celestial country. Eternal things seem very present; and why these bereavements? are they not sent that our hearts may be drawn from earth and follow the departed one, and there fix our whole affections, so that we shall truly live for heaven.

"We have had a second and severer stroke in the missionary circle, on account of its suddenness. Dr. and Mrs. Kerr, of the American Presbyterian Mission, lost their little boy under very painful circumstances. He was a beautiful child of four summers. On Friday evening he was out with his father in the city, and returned while we were with Mrs. Kerr at the ladies' prayer meeting, which that week was held at her house. The little boy came into the room, and seeing us engaged, did not say a word, but brought his little stool and sat on it at his mamma's feet, looking the very picture of health. He looked up with his blue eyes so full of meaning, thoughtful beyond his years, and as he rose up and passed by me, at the close of the meeting, I felt peculiarly moved, and drew him towards me and kissed him. That was the

last time I saw him alive ! He was suddenly seized with cholera in the night, and died on Sunday morning, within twenty-four hours after the attack. These unusual scenes have, by the grace of God, had a blessed effect upon my mind. I am in a peculiar sense the Lord's,—set apart for His work and service. I would feel this every moment ; then this thought would influence everything I do and every word I say."

The gentle, loving, sympathizing spirit so sweetly exemplified in the foregoing extracts, gave an inexpressible charm to Mary ; and as death entered other mission families, till four children in as many months were laid side by side under the waving bambóo, her sympathies were in constant exercise, and by many loving ways she sought to comfort the mourners. Little did any one think that her apparently healthy frame contained the seeds of disease, and that she would so soon follow these loved ones to the grave. How consolatory now to find that her graces were matured by these sorrows, and that her own spirit aspired more and more heavenward as she wept with others !

The distress in her native County caused by the cotton famine greatly affected her ; and though sensitively shrinking from obtruding in any way on others, yet she was emboldened to make an effort to raise something toward the

relief of that wide-spread distress. The following shews the practical energy of her love, a characteristic often seen by us. It is from a letter dated February 9th, 1863 :

“MY DEAR PARENTS,—It did my heart good to hear of your temporal welfare and prosperity, and to know that it is also well with your souls, insomuch that the more the Lord blesses you the more He disposes you to offer unto Him. We will unite our praises and thanksgivings unto Him, the bountiful Giver.

“I was much moved on reading the accounts in the papers, of the Lancashire distress. Many with whom in the past we have held sweet counsel are among the sufferers. I remember Mary C., Edward B., and many others, who are suffering in common with thousands. You have not mentioned in particular the distress at *Backbarrow* : so I hope where the scale of work is small, the distress will also be small. Noble are the efforts put forth to meet this calamity ! God is among you of a truth, opening the hearts of the rich to give. I thought I must try to do something among the friends here, and so I sent round a subscription paper, accompanied with prayer, and shall have £30 to send home this mail to Dr. Hoole, for the purpose of relief. In some little measure it will help. Poor things, my heart bleeds for them !”

We marked her sorrow, and the large-heartedness which led her, not merely to try to raise something, but which induced her to contribute one sixth of the whole amount herself. Her sympathies ran in no narrow channel ; not as some, whose efforts when strongly put forth in furtherance of one object, cease to regard other objects as of much importance. Mary had a breadth of view and a depth of feeling which energized every power of heart and mind, and brought into play the richest graces of the Spirit.

Her work she found in a strange land, and what heart she threw into that work we have seen ; but never did she forget the old home at Ayside, nor love its inmates less. She dwelt in body yonder, and was really at home there, happy in herself and ministering to the happiness of others ; in spirit she ever dwelt lovingly in her English home, and yearned for the renewal in the flesh, after service done in China, of those warm family associations. Witness the close of a letter to her younger brother.

“ Macao, February 23rd, 1863.

“MY DEAR JAMIE,—Really how busy you must be, what with attendance on the cows, writing for father, and many little errands for mamma and Ellie ! I am so glad you are able

to assist dear father, he has always so much to do. I hope you chose the prettiest cow to bear my name. Cows are not common here; but the Portuguese seem very fond of goats, and wherever we turn they are running and skipping about. Their milk is drunk by the Portuguese families.

“Macao is a delightful place, with beautiful walks. It is a small peninsula, forty miles west of Hong-kong, belonging to the Portuguese. Look and you will find it on the map, and then you will see the place where my Christmas holidays were spent, and how far we had to travel by steamer from Canton to reach it. On our approach to the town of Macao, we got quite near the place before we could see the least of it; then, on turning a rocky point, the whole town and bay burst upon us quite suddenly. The bay forms a beautiful curve, around which the houses are built, and a fort at each end to protect the place; these are garrisoned by soldiers. There are *ten* Roman Catholic churches here. O, poor deluded people! I saw them in the cathedral kneeling on the floor, and thought their faces looked the very picture of misery. Theirs is a cold, loveless religion; nothing but outward show, and altogether unsatisfactory to the mind, in which God has planted a desire for Himself; and where,

until He is received, there remains an aching void nothing else can fill. The priests are numerous, and strange-looking beings on account of their singular dress.

“We have generally been able to walk out before breakfast, which is very refreshing, and then again in the evening. These walks are such a treat to me. Dr. and Mrs. Williams, with whom we are staying, are exceedingly kind.

“Many Chinese live here, and some of them are Roman Catholics. The 18th was the Chinese new year; it is a universal holiday—their only one. All the shops were closed, and every one was dressed in his or her best. I was taken through the Chinese part of the town, that I might see how it would look if they kept the Sabbath day. It was touching! It grieved me much, though, to see the people gambling.

“I have twice visited the Protestant burial ground, where lie the remains of many devoted Christian men and women; among them, four wives of Canton Missionaries, and several children. I saw Dr. Morrison’s grave, and gathered a few leaves, which I enclose; you must keep them in remembrance of that great man, the first Protestant Missionary to China. . . . Love to all at home—a large portion to dear mamma, who has been so ill. I hope

when this reaches you she will be quite well. I am, dear Jamie, the same Polly who left home now almost a year ago, and still loving you all as dearly, and always having in mind the prospect of returning. O, to see you all once more!

Your affectionate sister."

This fresh home-feeling was not home-sickness, as we shall see presently. It is a real help, morally, to any one abroad, if warm, ardent love of kin is kept burning in the heart. To some it is all but salvation. The best cherish it most, knowing its power, and often finding it to be a more tangible, closer-knit tie than the attenuated bond which too often exists between the Church and its Missionaries. This feeling, rightly cherished, brings no weariness of the field of labour—no hankering after home. As it has been well put: "It is simply a good healthy desire to revisit the scenes of one's youth, to see again the faces of one's kindred, and then, strengthened and refreshed, to return with better heart for one's work."

In Mary Gunson's character there was a combination of many excellencies. Modest and retiring in deportment; affectionate and winning in temper; ardent and persevering; strongly loving her work, and resolute in seeking a full preparation for it; of warm and

broad sympathies; cherishing strong home-feelings while dwelling happily abroad; exercising simple trust in Christ, and enjoying peace with God;—her Christian graces attained a rich maturity. A character of such intrinsic worth won our esteem and love, and many cherished hopes were bound up in her and her interesting charge.



VIII. DISMISSAL FROM WORK.

“ With silence only as their benediction,
God’s angels come
Where, in the shadow of a deep affliction,
The soul sits dumb.”—WHITTIER.

IN Miss Gunson’s robust and apparently healthy frame the seeds of pulmonary disease were concealed; and in the midst of her arduous but happy engagements these seeds germinated, and soon this sad disease appeared in its full power. In December a cold settled on her lungs, with a hard, tearing cough, which medical skill could only soothe, not remove. For some weeks we watched it with anxiety, though Mary herself never thought it anything more than a bad cold, which she should soon be able to throw off. A physician was at hand, and his prescriptions were faithfully used; and sometimes they seemed to be efficacious. Her illness was first mentioned to her parents in February, 1863. Then she says:—

“The change in the weather” (from hot to cold), “to which I looked forward with such expectations, has been very trying to me. As the winter came on, a cold settled on my chest, and is not yet gone. Every possible care and

kindness has been shown me. Dr. Kerr has been assiduous in his attention, and supplies me with all the medicine I need. I am much better. Mrs. Piercy, myself, and the two boys go down to Macao the day after to-morrow."

This change was made with the hope of benefiting Miss Gunson; but it proved ineffectual, and, after a fortnight's stay on the sea-coast at Macao, they returned to Canton. In the early part of March she was much worse, and Dr. Kerr judged it best to call in two other physicians to see her. As the result of their consultation other remedies were tried, and for a few days in the middle of the month she seemed much better. But the improvement was only temporary; and her medical advisers were obliged to insist upon her removal to England, as the only means of even prolonging her life.

Her ardent spirit was full of hope when the temporary improvement took place; yet her will was ever sweetly submissive to God.

"Be assured, my dearest mamma," she writes, "every thing is done for me that is within the power of man to do, and the issue rests with my Heavenly Father, in whom my trust wavers not. What kind friends s raised up for me! I could not have a

kinder medical attendant than Dr. Kerr, who comes twice a day without fail, and treats me like a sister. Mrs. Kerr also comes to see me, and she quite cheered me by saying that at their family prayers they ever remembered me. Mrs. Piercy's dear Amá (nurse) has slept in my room for several nights, and is up the moment I move. She is an invaluable nurse; she seems to anticipate my wants. It is sweet to see the interest the girls take in my recovery. I am as comfortable as ever I expected to be; indeed, I have many comforts and even luxuries quite unexpected. What tries me most is not being able to study. I am an incumbrance and not a help. But this is my consolation—this thing is from the Lord; and often my prayer has been, Do with me what Thou wilt, send me where Thou wilt, give me any work to do, only strengthen me to do it manfully! Mould my will to Thine! And in this suffering, is He not fulfilling the good pleasure of His will, and perfecting the work of grace within me? Oh, for grace to watch and wait! I have everything to encourage me; 'All things work together for good,' and nothing good will He withhold! Health is at present withheld from me, so it would not be good. Oh, that I could realize this comforting truth to the uttermost; and, that these afflictions may lead me nearer

to the compassionate Saviour. Oh, the *fulness*; in Him is *all*, yea *all*!"

The hope of usefulness in China flashed up once more in Mary's heart after these words were written; but her work there was done—even just an entry on it, intense love shown for it, and then the Master said, "It is enough!" Sadly, yet without pain, we trace the workings of her mind when a gleam of sunlight appeared to her; but hardly to us, who knew more of the insidious disease preying on her. Two more letters only were penned by her in China.

"*Canton, March 28th, 1863.*"

"MY BELOVED PARENTS,—I cannot allow one mail to pass without relieving the anxiety my last letter would cause you. It is with much thankfulness I write of health and strength partially restored. The Lord has dealt very bountifully with His unworthy child; He in His goodness has seen fit to lay me low, and seemed to say, 'Rest and wait,' when my hasty, impetuous, and headstrong spirit had hoped to go forward without one check, and had leaped over the interval of time, and seen the language all but learnt.

"What are we? What our plans? Worms; dust! And our plans are but made to be lashed to pieces before our eyes!

“O, my beloved parents, I do hope this time of affliction will have an influence on every step of my future life, and tell its tale for good when opened is ‘The Book.’ Such sweet views of the preciousness of Christ, and of the full salvation for me treasured up in that bleeding sacrifice! Every murmuring thought fled before the rays of the ‘Sun of Righteousness;’ and when too weak to pray, I have felt Jesu’s arms around me, and was at peace. ‘Great peace have they that love Thy law.’ Yes; peace entire, complete, wanting nothing! The soul longing to

‘Sit and sing herself away
To everlasting bliss.’

I have been weak indeed, but now I am able to mingle with the family, join them at meals, and revel in the delicious breeze from the river. Some time must elapse ere my studies can be recommenced; my voice has still to rest until the effects of the long-continued cough are gone.

“Monday, 30th March.—I am still improving, and next mail hope to be able to inform you of my plans of work, if the Lord wills to continue the present improvement. . . . The Girls’ school was re-opened last Thursday, and more came than we expected. The Boys’ schools are becoming well known in the city; and for lack of funds Mr. Piercy thinks he must turn ap-

plicants away; yet this betokens progress, and cheers our hearts. O, pray on beloved friends, the dark cloud of heathenism is giving way before the light of the blessed gospel! Christianity is silently taking root and spreading her branches! I feel, now that my Heavenly Father has raised me up, there is work for me, and my cry is 'Teach me Thy way, O Lord!' . . . God, *into whose hands you committed me at parting*, has never left me. Good bye, beloved ones! May grace, mercy, and peace attend you in all your ways, is the prayer of your loving daughter,
POLLY."

Soon after this was written, disease resumed its power, and her strength began again to fail. Then the three medical gentlemen united in stating that she must leave China, and as speedily as possible be conveyed to her native shores. The blow fell heavily on Mary's heart: it was dismissal from her cherished work. The following best shows her feelings:

"Canton, April 13th, 1863.

"MY BELOVED PARENTS,—I know not how to break to you the sad news,—yet mixed with joy! I am indeed being led in a way which is dark and mysterious, but my hope is in God. You will see from the enclosed copy of a medi-

cal certificate,—and it spares me the pain of writing it. Oh! how it has pleased the Lord to crush, as in a moment, my hopes of a long and useful career here! No one but the Omniscient knows the struggle I have undergone, but through it the Lord has brought me safely; and when every hope was gone, He enabled me to cling closer to Jesus, and cast my torn and weary spirit on His tender mercy. My froward heart would fain fathom the why and wherefore of this sudden and unexpected affliction. Now, through grace divine I have given up all, and can patiently wait the issue. I am coming home with Mrs. Piercy and her boys; and if it please God to grant us a safe passage, and to spare our lives, we shall land at Southampton only a fortnight after you receive this letter. . . . I have been tried in mind by the great expense of the ‘Overland Route.’ I would much rather bear all the inconveniences of a voyage round the Cape, than incur one word of blame from the Missionary Committee; but I cannot help it, all seems done for me; the physicians would not allow me to come round the Cape. I feel a desire to get home immediately, as I know here there is no work for me. It may be that the pure air of my dear native land will recruit this feeble frame, and the Lord may have work at home for me to do.

Only, Father, to do Thy will, or, if it please Thee, to suffer it.

"The last two Sunday evenings I have been privileged to attend the English service. It was sweet to my soul to mingle once more among true worshippers. Another Sunday, and then our farewell. . . . O what pleasure the thought gives me, I shall soon see you all, and have real rest in my own dear home, and the best care and nursing love knows how to give. The Lord is sending me home to help you, and we will work heart and hand in His cause as long as life lasts. My best and kindest love to all. Believe me, your loving

POLLX."

A few more days, another opportunity of worshipping with the missionary circle; then she had to bid a last adieu to weeping groups of Chinese women and girls, and go on board the river steamer which took her to Hong-kong. There the steamship was waiting, and thence, the following day, April the 29th, she sailed away from the "Flowery Land," where she had so ardently longed to labour for Christ, and lead her heathen sisters to seek His grace.

IX. LAST DAYS.

"Go, gentle spirit, to thy wish'd-for rest;
 Thy work was done; thy Saviour's will obey'd;
 His presence was with thee, in every scene
 Of duty and of trial; and when He
 Saw fit that thou should'st leave thy toils, and come
 To Him, 'twas best, 'twas infinitely best,
 To change the dimmer sphere of earth, for heaven."

S. P. HILL.

ON the voyage home Miss Gunson's strength gradually declined, though she had the advantage of medical advice all the way. At one time it was feared she would not live to reach England; this however, was mercifully granted to her. She was carefully attended; very kind Christian friends, fellow-passengers, aided Mrs. Piercy in watching over her. Of these she was specially indebted to Sir Arthur Cotton, by whose kind and paternal care Miss Gunson was provided with many comforts she would not otherwise have had, particularly during the land journey through Egypt.

The change from one steamer to another was very trying to her feeble frame, but the short rest at Singapore, and then the longer one at Point de Galle, was as refreshing to her body as intercourse with the missionary friends there was to her spirit. Mrs. and Miss Keas-

berry, of Singapore, and Miss Scott, of Galle, were remembered by her with liveliest gratitude for their sympathy and loving attentions during her stay with them.

Only one letter was written by her on the voyage; it was penned with trembling hand just before reaching Suez. She still speaks of home and God. "All my thoughts, asleep or awake, are about home and its associations. O, that the Lord may be pleased to permit me to see your loved faces once more in the flesh. I am entirely in His Almighty hand, and He keeps me in peace. Through all the suffering He has called me to endure, His grace has been sufficient for me. I have found friends on every hand."

In the Mediterranean Sea she slightly revived, and on arriving at Southampton on the 17th of June, was soon met by her own relatives; her sister Eleanor came to London to take charge of her, and conduct her to the home towards which so many of her thoughts tended. The journey was accomplished safely on the 24th of June, and she was permitted again to embrace her parents and brothers and sisters. Yes, Mary had returned; the long, and to her, trying, voyage was over; in the arms of loved ones, she was again enfolded, as with attenuated form and weary step she entered her father's house.

"Give me my old seat, mother,
With my head upon thy knee !
I've passed through many a changing scene,
Since thus I sat by thee.
O ! let me look into thine eyes—
Their meek, soft, loving light,
Falls like a gleam of holiness
Upon my heart to-night.
I've not been long away, mother ;
Few suns have rose and set
Since last the tear-drop on thy cheek
My lips in kisses met."

What fresh tenderness and care her weakness called forth ! To herself, next to her Saviour's arms, this was her rest-house, the "Palace Beautiful" of her life's pilgrimage. What a delicious sense of repose now settled upon both body and spirit ! and this again led her thankful heart to God, who had vouchsafed to her this happiness.

Mary's strong constitution still battled hard with that fell disease which has slain so many young and fair. Again she rallied ; health seemed to return ; a month at home and she says : "My health is gradually improving. I am able to go out into the garden, but as yet have not reached its limits. Strawberries we have in abundance ; you can fancy how I feast. It pleases my Father to spare me a little longer ! My prayer is that His will may be mine."

In August she writes to Mrs. Piercy: "My headache will not allow me to think much, fever follows immediately, or your kind letter, over which I wept, would not have remained unanswered. It brought before me time gone for ever, carrying with it the downfall of all my cherished plans. *Then*, by strength from above, I was able in some measure to submit; *now*, I can only praise Him, who hath thus gently led His erring child." Next month she writes: "The damp weather has increased my disease. I have much more spitting of blood than ever before. I have had influenza, also, which quite prostrates me, taking away all my energy." Alluding to the Leeds Jubilee Meetings, she says: "How I rejoice with you in the pleasure of attending those glorious Jubilee Meetings, and regret that Mr. Piercy is not a partaker of your pleasure! How your heart would be warmed and cheered in seeing such noble gifts to the cause of missions!"

Her appointed race was now nearly run. During the last few months of her life she still gave her remaining strength to the good of others, and her thoughts often reverted to those she loved in China. The unexpected death of a missionary friend at Canton, the severe illness of another, and other information received from that place, still stirred the deepest feelings of

her heart. Her love for China continued in all its strength unto the end. The account of that event, and Mary's last days on earth, is given simply but well by her sister Eleanor to Miss Farmer, whose Christian love had led her, during a tour in the Lake-district, to visit Mary's home, and personally express her warm sympathy with our beloved sufferer and the family. Her sister says: "Before my sister left England for a foreign land, this precious promise was given her, 'Light is sown for the righteous, and gladness for the upright in heart.' (Psalm xcvi. 11.) This promise followed her through all her journeyings, and was her support when overtaken by the affliction which brought her to the gates of death.

"She never expected to reach her native land; but the Lord in His mercy permitted her to do so, and also to reach the home of her childhood; where, for a time, she improved so rapidly, that we entertained hopes of her ultimate recovery, and she too, began to form plans for future usefulness. She sent for, and undertook to circulate small monthly periodicals,—the 'Band of Hope,' 'British Workman,' and several others,—and this work she attended to till the last month of her life. I often felt astonished at the quiet resignation that always marked her deportment, as she was naturally of

an active and excitable temperament. To me, what she has accomplished during the last four years and a half, since she first left home, is most astonishing; she appears almost to have lived a lifetime in those few short years. And then to be laid aside almost entirely, must have been a great trial to her; but the grace of God was sufficient. One striking feature of her Christian experience was her simple, childlike trust and confidence in her Heavenly Father, the result of which was deep, unruffled peace.

"She continued, as we thought, improving until December, when she began to decline, but so gradually, that we scarcely perceived such to be the case. She still continued in the same happy state of mind, often talking of the Lord's goodness in His dealings with her; we often held sweet counsel together, and though older, she taught me much. She grew weaker; yet we hoped she might revive, as she had done before; and until within a few weeks of her death, she herself thought she would be spared. About this time Satan harassed her very much; as she became weaker in body, she felt this more and more, until she was brought into great heaviness. She still, however, retained and expressed her confidence in God, though she could not rejoice as before. Often she repeated that beautiful verse,

‘O Love, Thou bottomless abyss !
My sins are swallowed up in Thee ;
Covered is my unrighteousness,
Nor spot of guilt remains on me ;
While Jesu’s blood through earth and skies,
Mercy, free, boundless mercy, cries !’

She suffered much from severe pain in her chest. When the physician who attended her visited her on the 9th of May, he told her no human hand could help her—she must look to the Saviour. He read the Scriptures and prayed with her; and the Lord was sweetly present to comfort and cheer. When he was gone, Mary wept; not for herself, but for her father, who she knew had always entertained hopes of her recovery. From that time she sank very rapidly, riding out that day for the last time. She continued to be harassed by Satan, yet said, ‘I know I am the Lord’s; I have given up all into His hands.’ According to her wish that we should read the Psalms in regular order, a few nights before her death I read the sixth; when I had finished she said, ‘That is just my experience. I feel as if He had given me, like Job, up into the hands of Satan.’ I knelt down by the bedside, and we wept and prayed until she was comforted.

“Now she could no longer mingle with us in the family circle, which she so loved to do, her

end was drawing very near. On Tuesday the 17th May, she slept much, and was very calm. I read to her that beautiful hymn commencing

‘ O Love Divine ! what hast Thou done ! ’

She wished me to read it again, and seemed to enjoy it much. The next day she was much worse, and could scarcely breathe. In the morning I was not much with her ; after noon she sent for me, and I was with her all the rest of the day. The weather was excessively hot, she quite panted for breath. Expressing a wish that I would raise her up, I did so, and was struck with the deathly appearance of her countenance ; I said to her ‘ Dear Polly, you are very ill, but all is well with you.’ She looked almost reproachfully at me, and replied, ‘ O yes ! ’ I then called father, who came and spoke words of encouragement and comfort, and her faith was wonderfully strengthened. Father wished me to ask her what was to be done with the £20 she had saved. She paused a moment, and then said. ‘ It must be given to Mrs. Piercy, to be used as she thinks best for the Girls’ school.’ Thus her affections clung to China to the very last.

“ Mother had previously slept with her, but that night she wished me to do so. During the afternoon she repeated,

‘ Mercy, free, boundless mercy,’

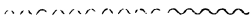
as if her heart clung to those words. In the evening I remarked to her, 'You seem happy to-night;' she said, 'I have been much happier all day.' I read our Psalm and prayed, and then lay down beside her; but not to sleep, for she had a very restless night.

"About half-past one in the morning I rose; she wished me to feel her head, which was then quite bathed in a cold sweat. The truth flashed upon me, she was dying: I said, 'Polly dear, this is not an ordinary sweat.' She understood me;' I added, 'Do not distress yourself, all is well with you.' She looked at me, but manifested no fear. I went to summon father and mother; on my return, while I stood watching her, she smiled very sweetly; I said, 'What is it dear?' she replied, 'It is Jesus;' and for some moments seemed wrapt in contemplation. By and by I asked her, 'Is He precious?' She seemed to summon all her strength, and emphatically uttered the word, 'Very.' I raised her higher with pillows, for all the time she was, as it were, catching every breath. Mother was kneeling beside the bed; she looked at her and said, 'Mamma, pray.' These were her last words. With her dear head on my arm, she passed away to be for ever with the Lord; 'for so He giveth His beloved sleep.'"

Thus, before daybreak on the 19th of May

1864, aged twenty-two years and four months, Mary Gunson's ransomed spirit "escaped to bliss." She was interred at Staveley on the 21st, where a younger sister, Annie, has since been laid by her side.

"Go, blessed saint, to Jesus go,
Transplanted from the vale below ;
Thou canst not quite depart !
Thy fair memorial stays behind,
Thy lovely portraiture we find
Engraven on our heart." C. WESLEY.



X. LESSONS.

"Abandon not—the breach is made;
The foremost ranks have won the wall
And will ye sheath a bloodless blade,
And tamely see your brethren fall?
Perish the thought! Where God hath given
A pathway for His conquering host,
There lies the straightest road to Heaven."

S. W. CORN.

Two very important advantages are ours from those who have preceded us in the missionary warfare. One is the vantage ground their efforts have gained for us. We stand in the field where they fought,—where they repose,—victorious, though fallen—the fruits of their every victory swelling our rich inheritance. "They rest from their labours, and their works do follow them:" for us to enter upon, under circumstances greatly improved, and with all the advantages won by their toil and suffering. We "enter into their labours," to find ours lightened by the preceding toil. Perhaps to reap where they have sown; for, "herein is that saying true, one soweth and another reapeth."

The other is the example left for us to copy. The spirit they were of, may be, ought to be, caught by their successors. It is not some intangible, ethereal influence, of which we may

dreamily think, but the very spirit "of power and of love" which actuated them, and which may be in us even in greater measure than it was in them. Not only what others have done, can we do; but what others have been, can we be; and still better, truer, purer, holier. "A double portion" of their spirit ours, how we should burn with zeal and true devotion to God, how we should labour for Christ in the earth!

Gentle and fair reader, Christ has much work yet to be done; shall any part of it be done by thee? Mary Gunson's field of toil may not be thine, but her spirit may; and thy work may be done more earnestly and prayerfully after reading this little book. If so, I shall have a reward. But more than this may be the result. China still has claims on woman's heart and needs woman's help; work fitly done only by woman, invites to diligent effort. Female agency is largely required, and must be employed by the church, ere the fullest measure of success crown its "work of faith and labour of love." Popery has this agency in China. Will the Protestant churches employ it in *this*, or in some succeeding generation. *Our* opportunities must be seized or they will speedily pass away from us. One-half of the present generation in China appeals specially to female

sympathy ; for that half consists of females. And shall the voice of two hundred millions of sisters be unheeded, or responded to feebly ? All may "devise liberal things ;" but *some*, yea *many*, must respond like Mary Gunson, by a personal consecration of life-long service for their Chinese sisters' weal and salvation. To this effect our first female agent, "being dead, yet speaketh."

The evangelization of China is the greatest work to which the Christian church is now called ; and the grandest event of this generation in which we live is the actual opening of China to the Gospel. In this signal interposition of Divine Providence, we have both the opportunity and the call to action. God's hand has cleared the way, and given His church the means whereby to accomplish this work, albeit so stupendous ; and from His mouth comes the promise of success :—"Behold, these shall come from far ; and, lo, these from the north and from the west ; and these from the LAND OF SINIM." "Truly as I live," saith Jehovah, "all the earth shall be filled with the glory of the Lord."





